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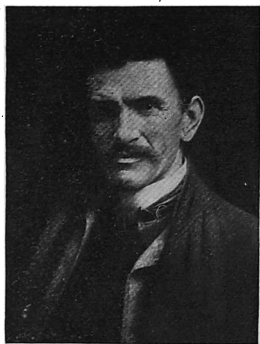


WINDY WEATHER
By J. Frank Currier

THE MINNEAPOLIS ART EXHIBITION

The problem of what the Northwest will do for the future of American art has been by no means so easily solved as the more hopeful of us thought it would be twenty-five years ago. Then the promise of a fuller prosperity than ever before for the Mississippi Valley held the vision of a general and rapidly growing taste for the best in art—and an American art, also. Chromos disappeared and etchings came in. Along with the etchings came to the Northwestern cities of any enterprise many a young artist of talent and some of European training. Each one betook himself to some central studio, and began a series of impressionistic views of the American artistic life, views which too often ended in a fireless grate and an empty cupboard. Merit or clap-trap—it was all the same—discouragement and retreat.

Yet people were making money in the West fast then. They were greedy of the pleasure of spending their money for beautiful things—but not for home-made beauty. Occasionally a picture by an Eastern artist found its way to the West, but in the main there was a general distrust of our own prophets of art. We went abroad for the canvases that came here to handsome homes, and if any one mentioned "American Art" as an entity—a really vital force in our big, growing life—the most of us cried out in scorn: "American art? What is it? Nothing but copies from European galleries. O yes,



J. FRANK CURRIER
From a Photograph

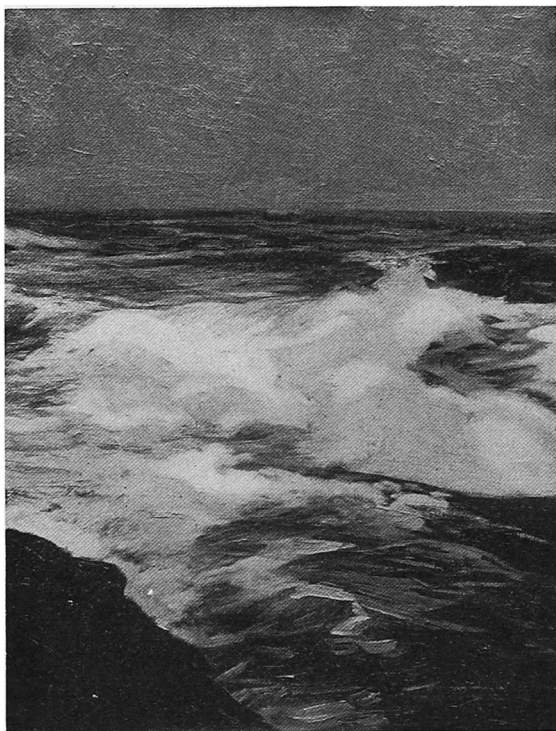


E. W. REDFIELD
From a Photograph

How can we have "an art spirit among the people" so long as we banish the one element that makes art a living force for artistic culture—the presence of a large body of young, earnest, and sincere American painters who can find here a sufficient financial basis for the present needs and a sufficient generous encouragement of belief in their mastery of American artistic conditions to tide them over the waiting-time between

an Inness or two, and possibly a Hart. But they are the exceptions. Bierstadt! Don't talk of Bierstadt! What is he but a refined pictorial advertiser of the big land spaces of the West? We want detail and technique—a Meissonier and a Gérôme, with a Bougereau slipped in occasionally. Paint us the Seine, but not the Mississippi."

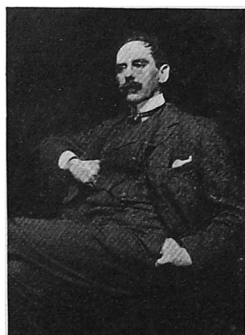
Thus easily it has happened that though wealth, and the culture that wealth brings, have changed the social aspect of the West into the class conditions of an older community, we yet lack the real art spirit that comes naturally to other peoples.



SURF
By E. W. Redfield

experiment and a settled, assured national art? The records of the past are eloquent.

It is no longer possible to say that we have not the material for such an art. It lies all around us, and the instruments to shape it are here at our hand. At any given instant it would be hard to find an American scene that has not its possible interpreter on canvas. Our artists have not been born under American skies and have not studied the modern theories of composition, light, color, and impression under foreign skies to no purpose of co-ordination of heritage and training. They spend their *wanderjahre* in Europe, and then come back where nature has more liberal and worthy interpretations.



C. C. COOPER
From a Photograph

And this land of beauty welcomes them with a largesse of new impressions. What do "we, the people," do for them? Mostly keep them at missionary work by sending their year's canvases around the land. No doubt they will reap their reward by and by in the knowledge of a finer American life, but there is nothing quite so good to put truth and vigor and sentiment into an artist's brush strokes as beefsteak. If our artists cannot always be sure of beefsteaks, will it make their art



THE CHAIN GATE, WELLS CATHEDRAL, ENGLAND
By C. C. Cooper

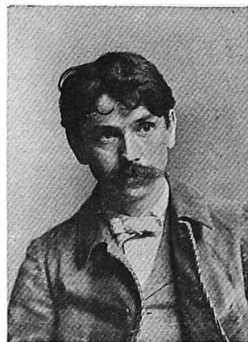
**SUMMER BREEZE**

By Charles H. Davis

any more imaginative to realize that a part of the national yearly bills for bonbons would yearly build a beautiful public art gallery in some one of our representative western cities, and fill its wall spaces with the best of American art?

If the national wealth, however, has not done all that was expected of it in the way of buying American paintings—and it must be said that there has been often good reason in the past why American paintings should not be bought—yet wealth has done something for art that was not in the bill. The artists who settled down with us hopefully a quarter of a century ago, only to pick up their effects and try a more expanding atmosphere, left too soon to get the benefit of this one great, new idea—the value of co-operation. Whatever the trust idea may be in commercial ways, it has been the salvation of the diverse art interests of the West.

And to the women of the West, the



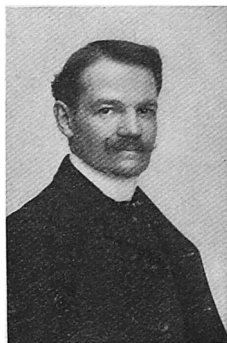
CHARLES H. DAVIS
From a Photograph



THE SOUTH WIND
By Frank V. Du Mond

pioneering of that idea through all the stages of the countless art societies that have sprung up all over the West has been a grateful duty.

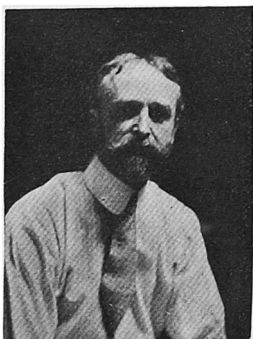
What Western women have done in this way through the women's clubs and their affiliated bodies will probably never be entirely known, but if the true history of most of our now numerous and youthful art societies is ever written, it will be found that some one woman or group of women has been the inspirer, if not the executive head, of every such movement.



F. V. DU MOND
From a Photograph

There is still plenty to be done, but the toddling age of our art growth has passed. It is not now too immature to be an influence, that to a certain degree shapes civic projects and determines even legislative appropriations. And we can now look ahead and hope for United States' art societies, and perhaps a national department of art at Washington to follow.

So far as the Northwestern states are concerned, Minnesota now takes undoubtedly the



JOHN W. ALEXANDER
From a Photograph

have shared in the usual history of like exhibitions in other cities so far as a large public attendance goes. The annual deficit has been small, and the guarantors have been able to comfort themselves with the reflection that Minneapolis, in this respect, is only repeating the history of all metropolitan cities where the early days of art have been nourished at the expense of private liberality.

The Society of Fine Arts now finds its rewards in a constantly growing membership from all classes of citizens; in the increasing reputation of

lead as the center of the art interests of a large section. And this leadership is due entirely to the action of a few Minneapolis citizens who met together about twenty years ago and formed the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts. The society has gone through its own troubles, financially and numerically. These were weathered long ago, and its position is now an assured and stable one in the regard of the Northwest. It has a guaranty fund available for all public art exhibitions. Art exhibitions have ever been a feature of the society's work. They went on with irregular recurrence until, in 1900, they were made annual exhibits, with a special view to the favoring of American art. And these affairs

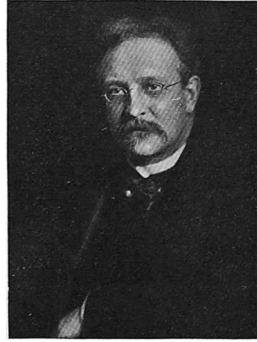


MEMORIES

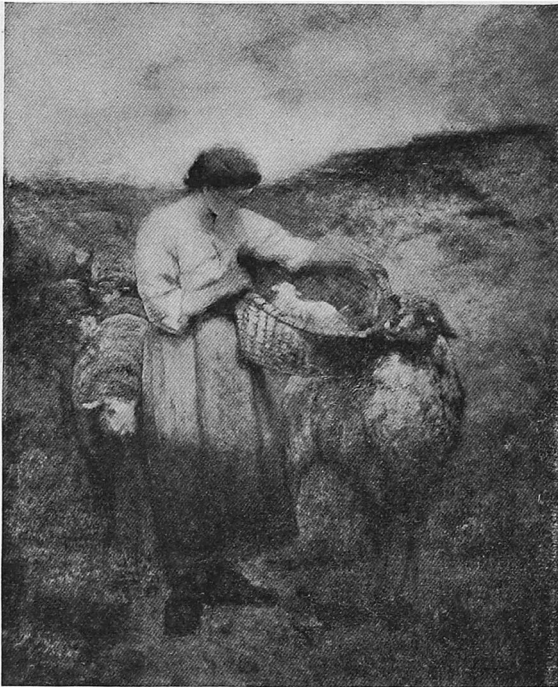
By John W. Alexander

Minneapolis as an art center; in the progressively high character of its exhibitions; in the recent incorporation of a state art society, with state aid; and especially in the prestige of the Minneapolis Art School, the work of whose students is recognized by Eastern schools as of a high quality.

The last and most distinctive of the annual exhibitions of the society has just closed a three weeks' exhibit at the art gallery. It was a small display, only eleven artists contributing, but the general plan of the exhibit was along a new line of treatment, which has resulted in a most definite and educational idea of the subtle



GEORGE INNESS, JR.
Copyright by Pieri McDonald
Photographer of Men, N. Y.



NEW-BORN LAMB
By George Inness, Jr.

variations in the work of each exhibitor. Each of the eleven artists sent his own plan for the hanging of his collection. To each artist's work was allotted eighteen linear feet of wall space, and each group was separated from its neighbor groups by perpendicular draperies of red, depending from festoons of the same material. These festoons made the complete circuit of the gallery, furnishing in

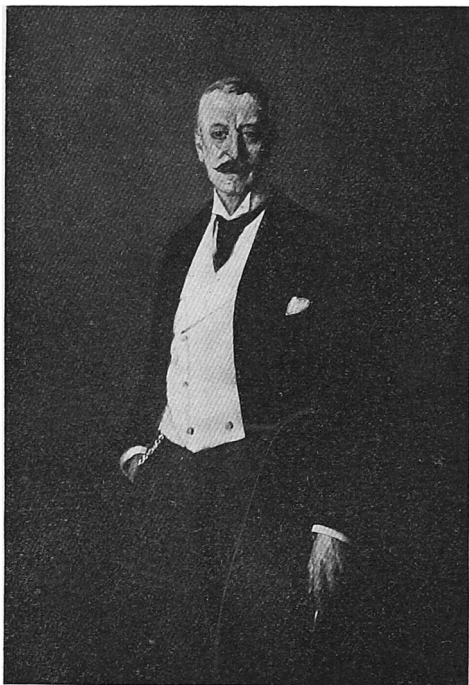


ROBERT HENRI
From a Photograph

no doubt as to the difference of mode. It was self-evident.

The chief fault of the exhibition, as a whole, was the lack of figure compositions, and possibly, a too great predominance of delicacy of treatment. One or two robust and powerful figure-pieces introduced boldly among these refined canvases of varied landscape aspects, would undoubtedly have attracted larger crowds. Apart from any question of the appeal to the gallery, every exhibition needs a certain gradation of motives. We cannot be upon the heights of pure meditation all the time. No; not even in an art gallery; and the life of

themselves a symmetrical color line in harmony with the background. The first impression on entering the room was, therefore, not of a miscellaneous blending of line and color, where an artist's individual style must be hunted out, but rather of a marked and often abrupt change of method, of color, and of that other mystery of the individual's work which we call his style. No more interesting way of studying the tone value of paintings could be found than by this group method. One man may have but two or three canvases to represent him—as was the case with Charles H. Davis—and his neighbor may send over a dozen. But there can be



BYRON P. STEVENSON, ESQ
By Robert Henri

the streets—the life that now is—the life of action and of vivid material demands should always get its full tribute in the pictorial procession.

It may have been this demand for the human interest that made the Colin Campbell Cooper architectural collection so much the center of attraction. His medium was a unique handling of water-colors on canvas, so cleverly done that the eight water-colors could scarcely be distinguished from the two oils. "The Chain Gate," a mass of detail and external architectural tracery, and several cathedral interiors of England and France seemed to share about equally the critical attention of artists, but The Flatiron Building held the popular interest. The Walton Hotel at Philadelphia and a scene in Penn Square were additional proofs of this artist's skill in clothing the commonplace brick and mortar of the business block with rich, warm colors of their own. The Cooper group had excellent foils in the landscape collection of Leonard Ochtman, to the left, and on the right John W. Alexander's beautiful phases of expressionism—a word which is suggested by the facility with which Alexander transfers his mood to canvas. He sent seven paintings, the two most important being his symbolical "Memories," which one can interpret at pleasure, and "A Ray of Sunlight," which received the Corcoran prize. The award will never be questioned. Alexander has not merely been putting paint upon canvas here, he has been creating a character. If the superb result somewhat obscures the quality of the rest of his group, this is merely relative. The other girl in the green gown, who takes solid comfort in her chair by the fireside on "A Rainy Day," is equally one of Alexander's fair women. But she is less of the goddess, and on more intimate terms with us than the preoccupied cello-player.

"Still Life" showed a charming effect of light reflected from the glaze of three pieces of pottery, each one full of color. A "Study," a slip of a young woman preparing to twist up her hair, and with an effective frock of greenish blue dropping low on the arm nearest us, gave another view of those sinuous lines of the female figure in which Alexander delights.

Along down the line of the wall opposite the entrance a group of Woodbury's marines made a strong color spot. This artist, one of the younger band of American painters, has been somewhat sharply discussed by Eastern critics. His work is so individual that it is impossible to pass it by lightly, but its sincerity has been attacked. He sent six—shall we call them sea-moods or Woodbury moods?—most of them dealing with the elementary phases of the ocean, untrammelled by the intrusion of man or his works, and each one a vivid spot of sea-blue in some different relation to light and motion. The Woodbury group was impressive, with a sense that its artist looked at the ocean from a "big" standpoint.

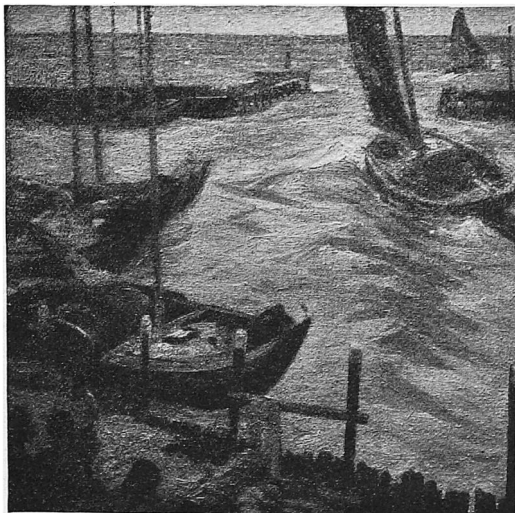


CHARLES H. WOODBURY
From a Photograph

Of other marines, the exhibition was quite destitute, except for two coast views, sent by E. W. Redfield, in his group of six. Neither of these could be said to represent Redfield at his best. No trifling with nature, though, marred the truth and dignity of "Boothbay Harbor," the somewhat large canvas which recently received the Hallgarten prize from the N. A. D. This painting shows the Redfield later manner to perfection. It has the sympathy for solitary places that Mr. Redfield shows. Redfield is plainly no more the painter of one mood of nature. In this broader scope he does better justice to the sympathy of his own imagination with the varying seasons.

Nothing could show this more fully in a smaller way than the "Canal at Center Bridge," where the eye follows the strip of water as lazily as the water lies upon this reposeful and simple corner of the world.

The Shirlaw collection was a large one. It was as representative as could be asked for, and in it one could trace somewhat of the changing fashions of artistic treatment in America. In the main, however, the line of fifteen canvases showed a strongly decorative character. Probably Mr. Shirlaw's long work in a mural way gives much of the processional air to this collection. The foreign street scenes show this strongly. In pose, action, grouping, and costuming the figures are adjusted to scenic effect. There were two or three interiors in the Dutch style, and one study of the nude in "Light and Shade," — bathers.



A DUTCH HARBOR
By Charles H. Woodbury

Frank Vincent du Mond sent also a painting of "The Bathers," delicate and alluring it was, but only from the ethereal quality which the artist gave to his sense of form and enveloping atmosphere. Du Mond appears to have gained a certain fine habit of painting, which may be only a phase of his development or may settle into permanence. Caught in each one of his four canvases is a whisper of the evanescence that underlies each passing happiness. Exquisite in sentiment, purely brilliant in color, and executed with a liberal and broad brush treatment, the flying moments are caught in his "Halcyon Days," "The South Wind," and "The Lonely River."

And here are two of the foremost landscape-painters of the time, Davis and Ochtman. Hung side by side, and each a painter of New England's beauties, they present together a series of impressions of beautiful tints, playing, as with Ochtman, over the surface of a settled and somewhat conventional method, or as with Davis, making a happy roundelay of light and shade. The dappled lights that fall through the branches of the Davis "Oak Boughs" are fascinating in their golden greens. More fascinating, even, is his "Autumn Clouds," a mere foreground of autumn slopes fading into a narrow blue line of ocean, and overhung by tantalizing cloud-forms. The same feeling for effects may be seen in Ochtman's certainty of touch as to his New England. But in spite of the tenderness of his feeling for his woods, and wintry paths, for the early spring days and the late October afternoons he gives the impression of too much limit to his compositions. "The Rising Moon" is a perfect queen of heaven, for instance, but she is too cold.

George Inness showed a glowing group of sunsets and pastorals. Inness is too little known of late years. His metier is settled, perhaps, but this should not be accepted as definite. The present exhibition hardly gives him at his happiest—a certain uniformity of composition and result being too marked. Robert Henri sent four portraits, whose technical qualities were so good that other criticism seems futile. Yet Henri might soften his interpretations of his sitters without losing one bit of his superiority of treatment. As to the most distinctive group of all, the Curier pastels, their uncommon quality is something not to be written about, but to be enjoyed. Made in the vicinity of Munich, this is the first time they have been exhibited here, and their dark tonal beauty is a new impression in the pastel line. They are full of sentiment and a certain majesty of command of very simple mediums. The foregrounds are apt to be shadowy and deep, with horizon lines of sunset tints breaking through, or cloud-masses separating above in the skies.

On the whole, this was a notable exhibit—this fifth annual at Minneapolis. For dignity, delicacy, and evenness of merit it exceeded anything given before. Its largest value comes from the promise it gives of what American art means at last for America.

EMMA E. BEARD.